

JAMESTOWN ISLAND DISCOVERY CENTER



The Yeardley House (APVA)

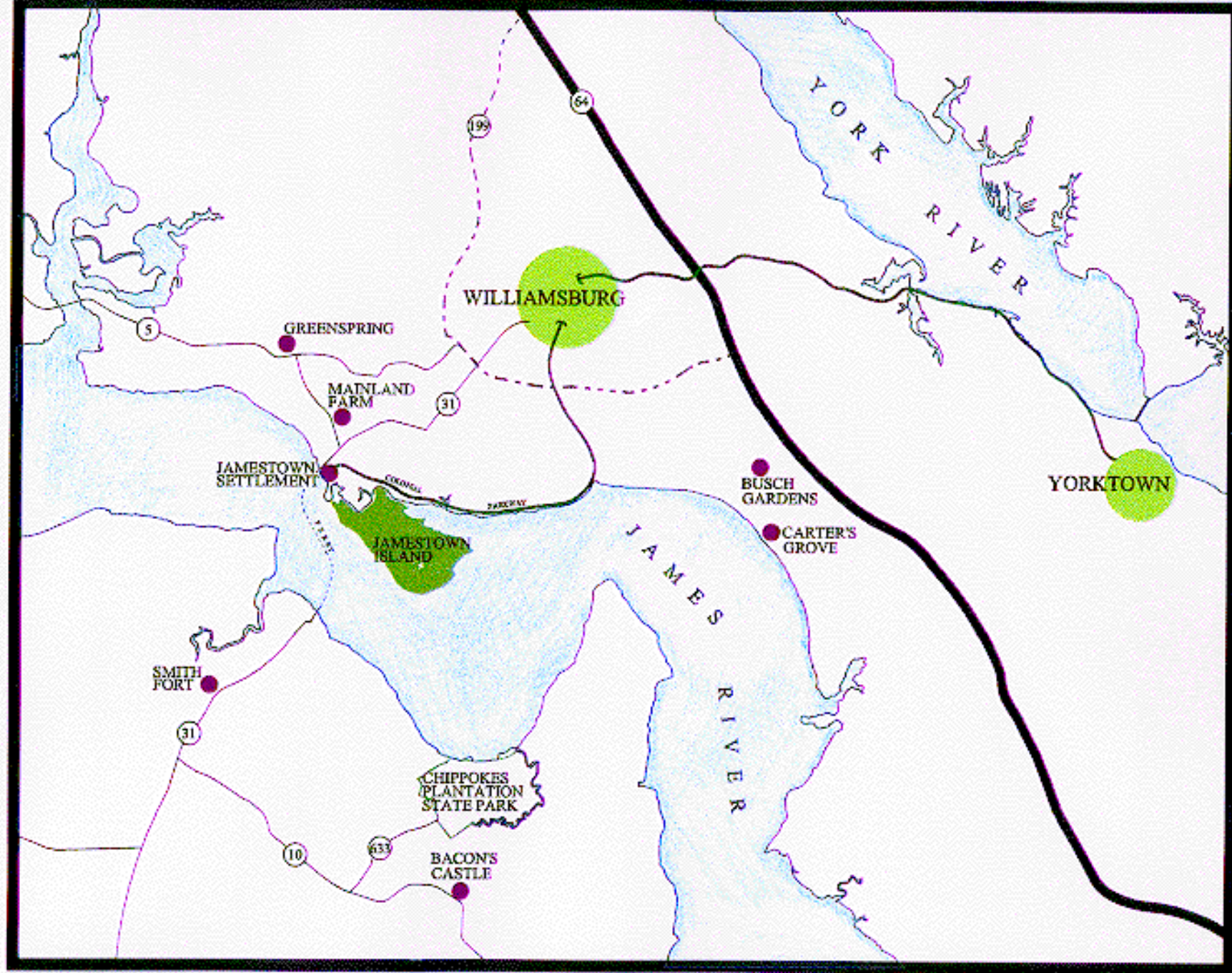
Our understanding of the earliest European and African settlement at Jamestown, our birthplace as a nation, remains inadequate. The Discovery Center will seek a comprehensive interdisciplinary understanding of 17th-century life and events and their implications for Jamestown. Although focusing on Jamestown, the Center will coordinate with other early sites and contacts throughout the New World. The Jamestown Island Discovery Center includes both visitor and research facilities. Ongoing research distinguishes the Island from other Jamestown sites. The Center will bring together historical, scientific, and archeological research for a holistic view of this formative part of our past. The Center will provide educational and interpretive experiences to the widest variety of people through exhibits, collections, programs, research, and publications.

The Discovery Center will be a collaboration between the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and the National Park Service. To give greater flexibility, developing it also as an NPS Cooperative Park Study and an Education Unit will be explored. NPS will coordinate with scholars, universities, and partner organizations to make scholarship and research publicly accessible and available through programs, lectures, short courses, seminars, publications and other media, exhibitions, and collections. Researchers will access primary sources through archeology, artifacts, linkages via Internet, scientific research, historic documents, etc.

The Discovery Center will be located on Jamestown Island with state-of-the-art offices, conservation laboratory, changing exhibition space, lecture hall, meeting rooms, and storage facility. The Center will include conservation of the impressive archeological and curatorial collections of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and the National Park Service. A key element will be coordinating with scholars -- making scholarship publicly accessible to both scholarly and general audiences. Collections from APVA and NPS will be collocated and exhibited together but stored separately (to appropriate standards) to maintain provenance. Researchers will be able to study objects from both collections at the same time. The Center will coordinate ongoing field research; process, catalogue, store, conserve, and monitor collections; maintain research capacity (library, electronic); and host annual conferences. Target researchers will range from high school students to post-graduates, with structures developed to transmit research findings to interpreters at both Jamestown sites as expeditiously as possible. As shown below, the two organizations have extensive experience in managing other 17th-century historic sites and resources.



Archeological excavation in progress during the summer of 1999 at the New Towne site on Jamestown Island. Archeological programs are often shared in cooperative agreements with other institutions such as the College of William and Mary and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and supervised by the APVA and the NPS.



Regional Map

JAMESTOWN: GETTING THERE

- Visitors and potential visitors need to know about Jamestown and all it has to offer as they choose their destinations. Such marketing begins long before they arrive and must provide visitors with both incentive and information for visiting Jamestown.
- Visitors have choices for getting to Jamestown's two venues: the Settlement and the Island. Visitors need clarity of access and movement. They need both certainties and choices; vehicular access, parking, inner Jamestown circulation, and alternative modes of movement must be easily understood.
- Visitors will go to the Williamsburg Visitor's Center, leave their cars there and take a bus to either venue using one of two entries -- one on the Parkway and the other off Rt. 31. This would minimize traffic in the Jamestown area.
- Visitors will go to the two gateways on the Colonial Parkway, get information and change their mode to a boat, bike, or tram. They could buy tickets to both venues. The same could be done at the entrance off Rt. 31.
- These approaches will reduce the parking requirements and would reduce the circulating traffic in and around Jamestown. It will also make it much easier to handle large parking requirements for specific events, like a large ceremony at the Settlement or on the Island during the 2007 Celebration.
- Vehicular access, parking, and bus accommodations are located at the Gateways. The Boat Landing at the Neck of Land complements these Gateways by providing additional parking and two other modes of movement - bikes and boats. The third ingredient of the access scheme is a small, electric tram that connects the two sites. This allows visitors to visit more than one venue without moving their cars. The fourth ingredient is a shuttle that connects the three sites to Colonial Williamsburg and Yorktown.

Access to Jamestown from Neck of Land

The Neck of Land provides a unique opportunity. As a portal to Jamestown, it can provide visitors with an opportunity to change mode of movement and assume a pace more in keeping with the Island experience. Visitors can park and board a boat, mount a bike, or get in the electric tram, with interpretation provided for each of these alternatives. The Neck of Land appears ample enough in size to accommodate this modal switch.

Special Experiences

Three modes of travel from the "Boat Landing": Boat, Bike, and Tram -- each a special experience.

- The boat can travel to the Island on the inner waterway and, weather permitting, travel around the Island and provide a combined history and ecology tour.
- The bikes can travel on a new bike path to the Settlement, the Island, and then on to the Island loop road.
- The electric tram will also take visitors to the Island and the Settlement and allow visitors to move between venues without using their cars.

Landings

The Plan shows suggested locations of the Landings. The primary landing will be on the north side of the Island on a small spit of land. From there visitors will walk on a bridge across a wetland area to arrive at the Island entrance. Alternative landings should be studied for the Settlement. While the landing for the three recreated ships would be ideal, its viability would be dependent on weather and could complicate the reception process.

There are three 1607 ship replicas at Jamestown Settlement. They are the *Susan Constant*, the *Godspeed*, and the *Discovery*.

